

Att: Melissa Sweet (Please post as Open Testimony)

Dear: Melissa Sweet and the entire Judiciary Committee of the Michigan House of Representatives: Please submit this letter

Not sure this letter will be read or just thrown in the trash. For those who took your valuable time reading this, I thank you in advance.

The reason I'm writing this letter is my concern and opposition to HB 5679.

About me, I was an International Figure Skater (In the Pair event). Performed in many World Tours Including (Disney On Ice and Holiday On Ice). After a Professional skating career I started coaching (mainly Pair teams). I was skating with the victim, we were training for the 2006 Super Bowl pre event at Ford field downtown Detroit. The Day before the Super Bowl the victim 15yrs old mothers calls me and tells me that she is sick and will not be able to perform the next day. The Show scrambled all that day to replace our spot without her. The Monday after the Super Bowl performance, I showed up at the Ice Arena and after getting off my coaching session, I was met by this very nice and well dressed man (it turned out to be detective wanting me to come down to the police station to answer some question. After that day my life changed forever. I ended up pleading no contest to 2 counts for 4th degree CSC. Landing me 25yrs on the Michigan Sex Offender list. I've never been arrested or in trouble before that or after. When people ask what I was charged with I tell them "Inappropriate touching" They all say the same thing. "Your on the sex offenders registry for 25yrs for inappropriate touching someone you were skating with? I thought that list was for Rapist. Then they go over all the influential people that also could be on this same Sex Offender Registry (we can add Presidential Democratic nominee Joe Biden / . Bill Clinton / Justice Kavanaugh / former president George H.W. Bush Oct 26,2017 two women say he touched them inappropriately / Justice Clarence Thomas. Now I know the answer. None of them where brought in front of a judge and convicted. Which is true. My whole point is: The Registry is a society list to point out people and to make them feel like they aren't human and should never be in normal society while on the list (which for many is life). It maybe intended to protect people (I would say geared towards kids, because that seems like the only logic anyone would even consider these unlivable rules. What the registry actually does is make society less safe and I will point out some reason:

- 1) my child is safe because there is a sex offender two blocks over and as long as I don't let them around the sex offender nothing will ever happen to my child. When the data shows that someone that is not on the sex offender list is more likely to victimize your child.
- 2) Its Individuals making the right choices in everyday situations not registries that will protect society (So lets look into treatment not dehumanizing to protect). I have a dog and he went to doggie college. One thing that stuck in my head was you can't keep telling a dog (bad dog, bad dog, bad dog) and expect them to be a good dog

- 3) I am a dad to my one and only child (daughter), she just graduated in 2020 from University of Arizona in pre-Med, The registry has put her through a lot, She was ashamed at her name to the point that one day she came to me so upset wanting to move and change her name because one of the mothers pointed out that she was the girl that dad was on the sex offender registry. It got to the point that when her mother (my ex) remarried we decided it would be best for our daughter to move out of state because that one mother traumatized her to the point she couldn't get over.

I know at this point that a Sex Offender Registry will exist. What I'm hoping for is:

- 1) Sex Offenders need to have a home to live in (with a public registry and prohibit living 1000 ft from any school makes it very hard to live anywhere) This creates homelessness, its very hard and very costly to keep track of a homeless Sex Offender
- 2) Sex Offenders need a job (like any one else, a job promotes stability) (with a public registry and prohibit working within a 1000 ft of any school) makes it very hard to get and or keep a job
- 3) Sex Offenders need hope to be a productive citizen (no pathway off a Sex Offender Registry is Hopeless and they will never contribute there full potential.
- 4) There are over 44,000 Sex Offenders on the Michigan Registry with many hundreds being added all the time, with very few ever coming off. Many of us are dad's or Mom's just trying to overcome our usually only blemish in the criminal system. A public registry creates many more innocent victim's (Sex Offenders children dealing with Public Registry).

I will close and wish you all good conscience when voting and or amending HB 5679. I hope you all will be able to read the data on studies of a Public Sex Offender Registry (the harm and the good) and remember no matter what is on the rules of a sex offender registry (they cannot erase a sex offenders family) There are a lot of innocent family members with no criminal record that also are exposed and restriction on there life.

Best Wishes,
Joe